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RECENT THEOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

SPINOZA. His Life and Philosophy. By SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK. Second edition. London: Duckworth & Co.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1899. Pp. xxiv + 427. \$3.

ALTHOUGH there is little change in the contents of this second edition, there is ample justification for its issue. In spite of the numerous monographs and special studies upon Spinoza which have appeared since the first edition (1880), Pollock's is still for the general reader the best introduction to the broader and more fundamental features of Spinoza's system, as well as the fullest account in English of Spinoza's life.

For the student who wishes to understand and appreciate intelligently the scientific and philosophic tendencies of present thought, and who is not satisfied to take the one word "monism" as sufficiently definite to describe a theory of the world, no author will better repay study. The geometrical form of Spinoza's ethics conceals from the superficial seeker the immense significance of the conceptions employed, and at the same time conveys the appearance of inevitable logic. But when the student has first penetrated to the real problems and then restated them so as to expose the real difficulties, not to say the inherent contradictions, implicit in Spinoza's positions, he has gained a point from which he can criticise as well as comprehend such concepts as those of "parallelism of mind and body," "determinism," "monism," "naturalism," and many others.

The present work is intended as a help in the first rather than in the second of these steps. It is always sympathetic, even when the author's own position is not that of Spinoza, and it does not undertake any such thoroughgoing analysis and criticism as is given by the monograph of John Caird, for example; but it is a valuable aid, not only for the general reader who wishes a general and untechnical statement, but also for the student who intends to make a thorough study. For it is a decided advantage to get Spinoza's general drift before attempting a detailed examination.

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